

Irwin Shire Council

Municipal Inventory Place Record

Place Details **Place Number:** 058 **Category:** 1A **HCWA No:** 1230
TPS No: 47 **Assessment Date:** 16/10/1996 **Last Revision Date:** 20/08/2004

Name: Russ Cottage & Russ Shop Site
Former Name:
Type of Place: Museum
Address: Cnr. St. Dominic's Road & Parker Street
Map Reference: HUNT 1:2000 BE42/35.03
Locality Name: Port Denison **Area of Site:**
GPS Northing: **GPS Easting:**

Photograph

Date of Photograph: 12/07/2004

Source: G. W. Grundy



Russ Cottage, north aspect

Ownership

Owner: Shire of Irwin **Owner Phone/Fax:** 08 99272068 08 99271453
Address: PO Box 21, Dongara, 6525

Site Details

Lot/Locn: Lot 2 **Diagram/Plan:** **Vol/Folio:**
Reserve: **Purpose:**
Assess No: **Vesting:**
Occupied: Yes **Occupier:**
PubAccess: Restricted **Lease:**

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Uses of the Place

Original Use: Residence

Current Use: Museum

Description

Walls: Limestone

Roof: Fibro Shingles

Condition: Good

Integrity: Medium

Orig'l Fabric:

Modifications

RUSS COTTAGE:

Prominently situated close to Point Leander Drive, this is a small four room cottage constructed of random rubble limestone with whitewashed walls, interior and exterior. The hipped roof is made of asbestos cement shingle. The main roof extends to cover the verandahs to the front and sides. There is a lean-to roof to the rear. Verandahs are supported on treated pine posts, floors to the verandahs and interior rooms are concrete, except the kitchen which are rammed anthill. Windows are timber framed with small pane casement to the front, double hung to the side and fixed to the rear. There are no ceilings inside the building.

SITE OF RUSS SHOP:

The site of Russ's shop is located to the north west of Russ Cottage on the south east corner of the St. Dominic's Road and Point Leander Drive..

2004

Interpretive signage has been erected on a timber support on the front verandah.

History

Const'n Date: 1868,1870

Source:

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Titus Russ

Built by Titus Russ, who is believed to have brought stone to the site in a wheel barrow from the quarry south of the river [Place No. 85]. Titus Russ arrived with his brother in the colony in 1853 and moved to Dongara in the early 1860's to work for Hamersley. The Russ family occupied the cottage for many years. Robert Russ used the ground to the rear as a market garden and operated the Newsagents and store on a nearby site. Prior to being acquired by the Shire of Irwin in 1970, the building had become badly deteriorated. The restoration work was carried out by volunteers of the Irwin District Historical Society and the building was officially opened by the Premier of Western Australia, Sir David Brand in 1971. Shortly after its opening it was inundated by the Irwin River to a depth of two metres, however all artefacts had been removed to safety. The Society has operated this building as a museum since that time.

(Source: IDHS Records and photograph)

2004

The museum displays were renewed in 2004 with additional interpretive signage, both interior and exterior. During this work, the timber lintel to the front room fireplace was found to be destroyed by termites and the chimney was in danger of collapse. The timber lintel was replaced with a steel galvanised lintel and repairs to the stonework were made to the chimney as well as to the rear kitchen wall, interior and exterior. A trench was dug along the rear (south) wall and filled with blue metal.

Chronology Entries

1964 Irwin District Historical Society formed

Irwin District Historical Society Records

1971 Russ Cottage is restored by the Irwin District Historical Society and was opened to the public. The opening ceremony was performed by Sir David Brand MLA

Bunney, R & Ellery, K, Dongara 1839 - 198-, Geraldton Newspapers Print, 1975

Historic Theme(s)

HCWA

AHC

104 Land allocation and subdivision

2.4.2 Migrating to seek opportunity

603 Local heroes and battlers

3.12.2 Developing sources of fresh local produce

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407 Cultural activities

4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia

Statement of Significance

Russ Cottage is of cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:
the place is an integral part of the historic coastal township of Dongara, an early settlement with a significant number of nineteenth century buildings remaining in the town;
the place is a good example of a random rubble limestone building in the Victorian Georgian style, its simple construction demonstrating the methods used during the early development of Dongara;
situated on a prominent corner at the edge of Point Leander Drive, the place is an obvious landmark, and together with other buildings within the historic precinct of Dongara, contributes to a significant streetscape;
the place was constructed for the Russ family, early European settlers of the Irwin District. Assisted by ticket-of-leave labour, the place was built by Titus Russ, and was also occupied by his youngest son Robert Russ who established a shop adjacent to the cottage and a market garden on the adjoining land. Produce from the market garden was transported for sale in the Kalgoorlie goldfields during the 1890s; and,
since 1971, the place has been highly valued by the local community as a museum housing items of local historic memorabilia, and contributes to the sense of place of the Dongara community.

Management Category: 1A

PERMANENT ENTRY ON THE STATE REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES.
Highest level of protection appropriate. Provide maximum incentives under the Town Planning Scheme with encouragement to the owner to conserve the significance of the place. Prepare a floor plan and photographically record the place prior to any redevelopment.

Other Listings

NTWA - Classified; 05/09/1983
Shire of Irwin - Town Planning Scheme (47); 10/03/1998
HCWA - State Heritage Register (Interim); 20/05/2003
HCWA - State Heritage Register (Permanent); 17/10/2003

Supporting Information

IDHS Records
AHC Reference 009644 01-02
HCWA Database No. 1230
Russ Cottage Conservation Plan, Naomi Lawrance, 2001.

Additional Photographs

Date of Photograph: 16/10/1996 IR058-1

Source: *Suba & Grundy*



Russ Cottage, front north aspect
